

## Everywhere at Once Films by Sylvia Schedelbauer

Sylvia Schedelbauer In Person

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In the films of Sylvia Schedelbauer, personal internal reverie and expansive cultural history collide. Assembled largely from deeply researched archival footage and radically edited (in an elegantly flickering style entirely her own), Schedelbauer's films present a strikingly visual space of interiority in which dreams, personal biography, collective memories and family histories fuse to form a complicated vision of fragmented transnational identity in the context of 20th Century history. Visiting from Berlin, Schedelbauer appears in person to present a retrospective of recent films 2007–2018 including *False Friends*, *Remote Intimacy*, *Way Fare*, *Sounding Glass*, *Sea of Vapors* and *Wishing Well*. (Steve Polta)

*[The films of] Sylvia Schedelbauer's [stage] confrontations between images and their histories. Through associational and oppositional editing strategies, she constructs dynamic images which seem to appear at the borders of vision and the limits of knowledge, filling in material and perceptual gaps that instantly reveal other blank spaces and unanswered questions: social histories collide with personal memories. By employing collage techniques and toying with said voids, Schedelbauer's films reveal the world in a perpetually unsettled state of flux and travers into liminal zones where time and space collapse. (James Hansen: Women to Watch: Sylvia Schedelbauer. Cléo: a journal of film and feminism. [www.cleojournal.com/2014/12/03/women-to-watch-sylvia-schedelbauer/](http://www.cleojournal.com/2014/12/03/women-to-watch-sylvia-schedelbauer/))*

*It is the act of combining as much as it is the act of selection that distinguishes Schedelbauer's work with found footage though—hybridity is an essential component of what she does, blending two or more pieces of film to create a third, a fourth etc. This spawning of new material is a process of transformation that takes place on screen, each film living out a perpetual becoming, each precipice replacing the last. These shots exaggerate the 'evanescence' of the film image, the quality that places us as viewers under the command of the filmmaker who ultimately decides how long we see each shot and what it will be replaced by. This is a position that Schedelbauer assumes with unparalleled care, time and consideration, ensuring at every turn that the fragments she has unearthed for us always merit a second, much closer look. (Alice Butler: Grazer Kunstverein. [www.sylviaschedelbauer.com/PDFs/GKV\\_Spring\\_2019\\_booklet\\_EN.pdf](http://www.sylviaschedelbauer.com/PDFs/GKV_Spring_2019_booklet_EN.pdf))*

**False Friends** (2007) by Sylvia Schedelbauer; digital video, b&w, sound, 5 minutes, exhibition file from the maker

A montage of mid-century found footage: mysterious strands are obsessively braided to create a poetic reflection about an anxious interplay of memory and projection. (Sylvia Schedelbauer)

With the simple means of old black-and-white archive material and rather familiar, albeit slightly alienated horror soundtrack, the director manages to draw the viewer into the nightmarish atmosphere of the images by the unsettling rhythm of the cuts. *Falsche Freunde* takes place in the undefined space between video art and feature film narration. The oppressive tension never abates, even though the mysteriousness, which is reminiscent of David Lynch, of the dark—in both senses of the word—scenes do not look set to be deciphered. (Jury statement, German Film Critics' Award: Best Experimental Film 2008)

**Remote Intimacy** (2008), by Sylvia Schedelbauer; digital video, b&w, sound, 15 minutes, exhibition file from the maker

Stream of consciousness with fictitious and found stories and a personal reference. (Sylvia Schedelbauer)

From found footage and text fragments, Sylvia Schedelbauer puts together a diving expedition into the subconscious in her film *Ferne Intimität (Remote Intimacy)*. Individual and collective traumas of suffering and loss conjoin in a narrative that irresistibly pulls us in, one that can be read as a metaphor for the catastrophes of the past century. Rather than drawing on well-known media imagery, (...) the artist makes her own discoveries of moments of high visual poetry, to which she adds a sensitive and insightful soundtrack. (Jury statement, BILD-KUNST Award, KunstFilmBiennale 2007)

**Way Fare** (2009) by Sylvia Schedelbauer; digital video, color, sound, 7 minutes, exhibition file from the maker

A layered tone poem of found images and woven soundscapes renders a shifting psychogram; a nomadic passage across spaces in and out of time. (Sylvia Schedelbauer)

*False Friends* and *Way Fare* rely on a hypnotic, subconsciously suggestive combination of images, ones that can evoke semi-tangible meanings upon close, repeat inspection (e.g., Freudian “dream-work”), but in the actual viewing are slippery and terse, drawing only traces of their denotative meaning from the mind before their disappearance. (Michael Sicinski, Cinema Scope)

**Sounding Glass** (2011) by Sylvia Schedelbauer; digital video, b&w, sound, 10 minutes, exhibition file from the maker

A man in a forest is subject to a flood of impressions; rhythmic waves of images and sounds give form to his introspection. (Sylvia Schedelbauer)

With very few images culled from the flood of footage originally taken during World War II, the filmmaker manages to express the incomprehensible trauma of war as a strong visual experience. With a highly compressed use of sound and image, *Sounding Glass* creates a visceral impact that can only be achieved by cinematic means. (Jury statement, International Competition, International Short Film Festival Oberhausen)

**Sea of Vapors** (2014) by Sylvia Schedelbauer; digital video, b&w, sound, 15 minutes, exhibition file from the maker

A cascade of images cut frame by frame flow into an allegory of the lunar cycle. (Sylvia Schedelbauer)

With a keen attention to form, Schedelbauer masterfully imparts tone and emotion through audiovisual means. The sensate work pulses with poetic imagery, recurring allusions to vessels and openings—a bowl held between hands, the space between two fingers, and voluptuous lips are superimposed over elemental landscapes—sun and forest, ocean and moon. Images of a body are intimate and close-up, rendered in lush, nuanced black-and-white celluloid tones. An ethereal soundscape composed by Jeff Surak is reassuringly expansive, drawing us out from the claustrophobic image into the universal. The film conveys the trepidation with which one bares one’s innermost, vulnerable space, and is palpably felt through the strobing effect—it is as if one is being consumed by another, or by the pull of tides. And to similar effect it draws in the viewer, down into the open vessels, engulfing us into a hyper-subjective space, with room for us to experience our own seas of consumption. (Aily Nash, *The Brooklyn Rail* [www.brooklynrail.org/2014/06/film/oberhausen-turns-sixty](http://www.brooklynrail.org/2014/06/film/oberhausen-turns-sixty))

**Wishing Well** (2018) by Sylvia Schedelbauer; digital video, color, sound, 13 minutes, exhibition file from the maker

Gushing colors. A time disjointed, yet synchronous. A transcendent turn, a quest for agency, a reunion with currents of the forest. (Sylvia Schedelbauer)

A child exploring a forest is the starting point for an almost psychedelic journey, realized through continuous cuts, overlaps and flashes within, through the perceptive persistence of the flow of still images in succession, brings us into an imaginary world where color plays a primary role; and memory itself becomes a visual tool with which to create levels on levels of images and meaning. In this way, a new world appears to our eyes, a world in which we cannot do anything but follow the images, sounds and colors, getting lost within ourselves and within the intricate forest of our visual memory. (Stefano Romano, program notes, Art House Shkodër)